

**Bedford Sign Bylaw Committee
December 20, 2012, 7:30 PM
Town Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room**

Minutes

Attending: Jeff Cohen, Karen Kenney, Mark Siegenthaler and Ralph Zazula.

Absent: Lisa Mustapich, Kevin Latady, Chris Laskey – Staff.

Public in Attendance: Bruce Blake.

7:30 p.m. meeting called to order by Cohen.

Approval of December 13 meeting minutes was tabled to the January 10, 2013 meeting.

Bruce Blake commended the committee for their efforts and said that he agrees with a lot of what the committee is recommending. He asked if the memos that present feedback that the committee has received to-date could be compiled and made available to the public. Jeff Cohen said he would try to compile all the documents.

The committee discussed the comments it received from Planning Board member, Sandra Hackman. The committee took action on several of the comments to incorporate some of the suggestions. Several of the comments covered issues that the committee was already addressing. The committee will be requesting clarification on one of Sandra's comments about real estate signs. Regarding comments 1 thru 3 - SBRC is addressing these issues; Comment #4 - SBRC will be lowering height from 10' to 8'; Comment #5 - SBRC will put language back in ("whichever is smaller"); Comment #6 - SBRC will be revising the amended sign height to be lowered from 10' to 7'; Comment #7 - SBRC will revisit the maximum allowable sign area; Comment #8 – no action being taken; Comment #9 – SBRC will delete, "Additionally" from sentence; Comment #10 – no action being taken, this is the current language and there have been no issues with this wording; Comment #11 – SBRC will consider comment, but not a high priority; Comment #12 – No action, banners to remain 3'x5'.

It was noted that some of the Red-highlighted edits are actually not amendments to the Bylaw, but are highlighted because their location in the Section has been reorganized. This is confusing; therefore, where no salient change is being made, the text will not be shown as a revision (Red-highlighted text).

Karen Kenney said the Chamber of Commerce will be developing language for movable freestanding signs to present to the Selectmen. The Selectmen shall develop a policy for these signs based on this feedback.

The committee discussed edits to the Sign Bylaw proposed by Mark Siegenthaler in response to feedback received at the December 13 public meeting.

- Delete descriptive text from *Movable Freestanding Sign* definition. SBRC concurred with recommendation.
- Edit paragraph on area of a sign to omit portion of sign that provides illumination, as follows: “The area of a sign shall not include any structure or frame necessary for illumination from the top of the sign.” This would address the offensive glare, overspill and dark-sky pollution that ground-mounted fixtures create by positioning the lights on top of the sign directed downward. SBRC concurred with recommendation.
- Add *Movable Freestanding Signs* to list of prohibited signs. SBRC concurred with recommendation.
- Prohibit property maintenance services-type signs (contractor signs for landscaping, lawn care, tree services, painting, plumbing, etc.). SBRC concurred with recommendation.
- Delete, “except where otherwise permitted in this Bylaw” from internally illuminated wall and freestanding signs under Prohibited Signs sections. SBRC concurred with recommendation.
- Clarify that *Construction Signs* are for construction projects on the premises and that one sign is permitted for the premises, not one sign per contractor. SBRC concurred with recommendation.
- Lowered the allowable height for *Traffic Control Signs* from 10-feet to 8-feet. SBRC concurred with recommendation.
- Clarified when more than one freestanding sign may be permitted on a lot: “One sign is permitted on a lot. In the case of a lot with multiple entrances where a single freestanding sign or other signage on the property does not effectively identify the business on the premises, additional freestanding signs may be permitted by Special Permit issued by the ZBA.” SBRC concurred with recommendation.
- Provided language to describe the circumstances under which a freestanding sign area may be increased by Special Permit and the permissible size for the sign: “If the sign serves more than one business on the lot, the structure may extend to no more than (7) seven feet above the mean finished grade and may be not more than (8) eight feet wide.” This addresses comments received as to when a Special Permit is warranted and concerns for permitting signs that are excessively tall. SBRC concurred with recommendation.
- Increased the maximum area of a freestanding sign to 56 square feet. SBRC concurred with recommendation.
- Delete recommendation to reinstitute internally-illuminated signs in the Industrial District. SBRC concurred with recommendation.
- Address Typo in Hours paragraph regarding referenced Section (should be Article 40.5). SBRC concurred with recommendation.
- Recommended reducing size of “Open” banners & Flags to 2’x4’. SBRC decided to leave size at 3’x5’.

The members discussed several of the comments received from ZBA member Stephen Henning.

- The reference to “painted on” wall signs will be removed from the definition of *Wall Signs* to eliminate the contradiction between Bylaw sections.
- References to *Pole Signs*, *Portable Signs* and *Ground Signs* will be deleted.

- The committee did not concur with providing definition for “Safety Signs” or adding “directory” to the definition of a sign.

Due to the number of comments submitted and the late hour, the committee will continue its discussion on the remaining comments at the January 10 meeting. The members agreed to limit its discussion to the comments that most directly address the committee’s objectives.

Karen Kenney passed out some amusing sign photos that could be used in the SBRC’s PowerPoint presentation at Town Meeting to lighten the mood.

Members agreed not to meet on January 3. The committee will meet on January 10, 2013 to vote on the amendments that will be presented to the Selectmen for their approval and inclusion on the Spring-2013 Town Meeting Warrant. The committee also agreed to meet on January 17.

10:10 p.m. Siegenthaler moved to adjourn, Kenney seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Cohen.

Upcoming Meetings:

January 10, 2013

January 17, 2013